UNITY®

A WAY OF LIFE

August 1988

Special Healing Issue

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UNITY®
A WAY OF LIFE

Unity ***magazine was founded in 1889 by*** **Charles and Myrtle Fillmore**

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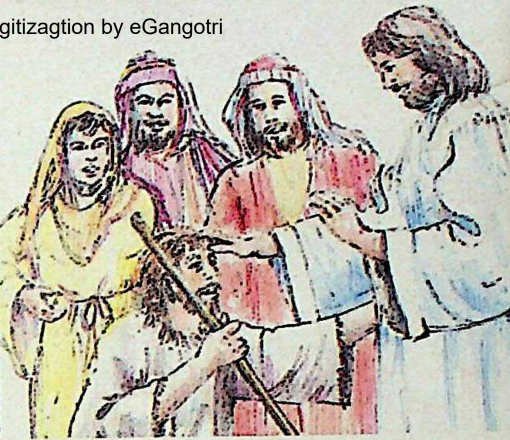

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WELCOME TO UNITY MAGAZINE

A WAY OF LIFE

You might call it an embarrassment of riches. We had so many wonderful articles and essays to offer in this special healing issue of *Unity* magazine that we have had to carry some of them over into future issues.

The next installment of Marion Brown's series of four lessons on spiritual prosperity and this month's questions and answers for our "Viewpoints" column are missing from this August issue but will return in September.

If you or anyone you love has a challenge with any aspect of physical, emotional, or mental health, this issue is sure to play an important part in the healing process. We feel certain that this August 1988 edition of *Unity* magazine will be a "keeper" for you to refer to as you encounter the challenges of growth along the spiritual path.

Blessings and good health to all our friends!

Pamela Yearsley

Editor

The Basis of Spiritual Healing

BY ERIC BUTTERWORTH

"SOME PEOPLE get all the breaks!" is a plaint often expressed by those who believe that life is unfair. True, some people do always seem to be healthy, even those who do little or nothing to achieve that state; they may even call themselves "disgustingly healthy." They always seem to be "lucky" about not catching the seasonal contagions that "make the rounds."

Other people always seem to be getting into or out of sickness of one kind or another. It is not always those who are reckless. They may take care of themselves and watch their weight and their diet and get plenty of rest. Yet invariably, it seems, they are the ones to succumb to the latest virus. What is the answer? Is life really unjust?

For centuries, when sickness appeared in the flesh, the cause was thought to be in the flesh itself. It was just bad luck, or God's will. Thus, people would make no attempt to be other than what they believed themselves to be and, sadly, sickness was part of what they believed. It is precisely at this point that we need the insight of Truth, the transcendent perspective that will open the way to what Jesus called "abundant living," and the way to achieve it is by means of spiritual healing.

To understand the spiritual healing process, it is important first to let go of the belief that there is anything in God or in nature that would or could *will* sickness or deterioration for you. In what Teilhard de Chardin calls "the unimpeachable wholeness of the universe," you are created in and of wholeness. So health is not something you can get in bottles, or even in prayers or treatments. You cannot *get* health. You can only *be* health.

Giordano Bruno once said, "Nature is a living unity of living units, in each of which the power of the whole is present." A fantastic concept! What he is saying is that you are a spiritual being, a whole crea-

Paul A. Pavlik

ture, and the wholeness of the universe is ever seeking to fulfill itself in you. You are always as worthy of the full support of the universe as the lilies of the field or the birds of the air.

This is the realization that came to Myrtle Fillmore, who was dying of tuberculosis, while she and her husband, Charles, were attending a lecture on New Thought 100 years ago. Whether or not it was the theme of the lecturer, E. B. Weeks, the important thing is that something happened within Myrtle during that session. A realization dawned that changed her whole life. Certainly it was a great moment for all of us, for it was that birth of light in Myrtle Fillmore that marks the beginning of Unity. She had grown up in a family in which there had been a history of tuberculosis. The occurrence of the disease in her was accepted as hereditary. In a flash she had a realization that she formulated into an affirmation: *I am a child of God, and therefore I do not inherit sickness.* This became her prayer of faith. She identified with that "unimpeachable wholeness of the universe." In time there followed a complete remission, a dramatic healing. She went on to live in radiant health and productivity.

Charles Fillmore, applying his keen intellect to the Truth that was intuitively felt by Myrtle, articulated a process of spiritual healing that thousands of people have successfully applied. One of the basic tenets of this process is that health is the normal condition of your body. It is a profound insight that we need to understand and accept in our consciousness. You see, what Mr. Fillmore would have us realize is that health is not simply a brief respite from illness. In healing we are not dealing with eradicating sickness or fighting off destructive elements of the body; rather, we are concerned with the acceptance and expression of the pure and perfect life and light of God.

When Marconi was very young, he told friends that *he* would be the one to give wireless to the world, not the many older researchers who had been experimenting in the field for years. After he did in fact fulfill his promise, he was asked how he had been so certain. His

Life does not get old or sick or diseased. Life is always whole, but the divine life force flows through you in the degree that you accept it.

answer: the other scientists were seeking first to discover a means to overcome resistance in the air to the messages that would be sent, whereas he had already discovered that there was no resistance.

Traditional Christianity and Judaism have long been hung up on dualism, locked in the struggle with the power of evil. By far the majority of the preaching and moralizing of the clergy has been centered on the devil and the sinfulness of every person. But we have discovered that there is only one power, God, the good omnipotent, that evil is simply a concealment of the power of good, and that sin is simply a frustration of our potential as spiritual beings.

In this same sense, *materia medica* has long been seeking to overcome or "cure" disease. But today we know that life is not to be known by studying disease, any more than we can understand the world by studying it in the darkness. The greatest progress in medical research today is being made in the study of what makes well people well instead of what makes sick people sick. Instead of studying anatomy with cadavers, the focus has been on studying the excellence of life in the athlete.

The underlying cause of life is the "divine life force." It is not something extraneous to you that acts upon you when properly contacted. It *is* your very life. It does not come and go or start and stop. It does not step up its action through your prayer. Your prayer changes you in consciousness so that more life is revealed. Life does not get old or sick or diseased. Life is always whole, but the divine life force flows through you in the degree that you accept it.

A Greek philosopher said, "The main part of learning is unlearning our errors." The greatest error to be unlearned is the dualism of God "out there" and us "down here." The whole process of spiritual healing is befuddled by the attempt to get God "out there" to do something for us. God is not a healer. God does not heal. God is life, life that is present in its entirety at every point in space; thus, life that is present within us. Healing, then, is not something that God does for us, it is a movement in our consciousness in which we accept to a greater degree than ever before the unrestricted flow of that which eternally is. God is life—whole and complete—no matter what the condition of the body.

Unlearning the errors of our training in religious tradition is not easy. We need to discipline ourselves to keep a clear perspective: God is life, the inexorable healing flow within—all the time—not just when we may be prayerfully reminding Him that this is what He is supposed to be.

The word *whole* is an interesting word. It means "not divided into parts, unfragmented." It also means "hale, hearty, healthy, holy." From a psychological perspective it might mean "the integrated personality." Medically it might refer to what is called "high-level wellness." It might also mean that life is in balance of health, relationships, and conditions.

Frequently in the literature of the healing industry there occurs the phrase "the patient as a whole." This attitude represents an encouraging step in dealing with the patient who has a problem, instead of impersonally dealing with a problem that a patient has. The latter can be observed in any hospital ward (a caricature that is humorous but which in implication is not really funny); for example, an intern in talking to the nursing staff may refer to "the cardiac in 203," "the ulcer in 229," or "the hernia in 242." It is just possible that these are people with names, but you would never know it.

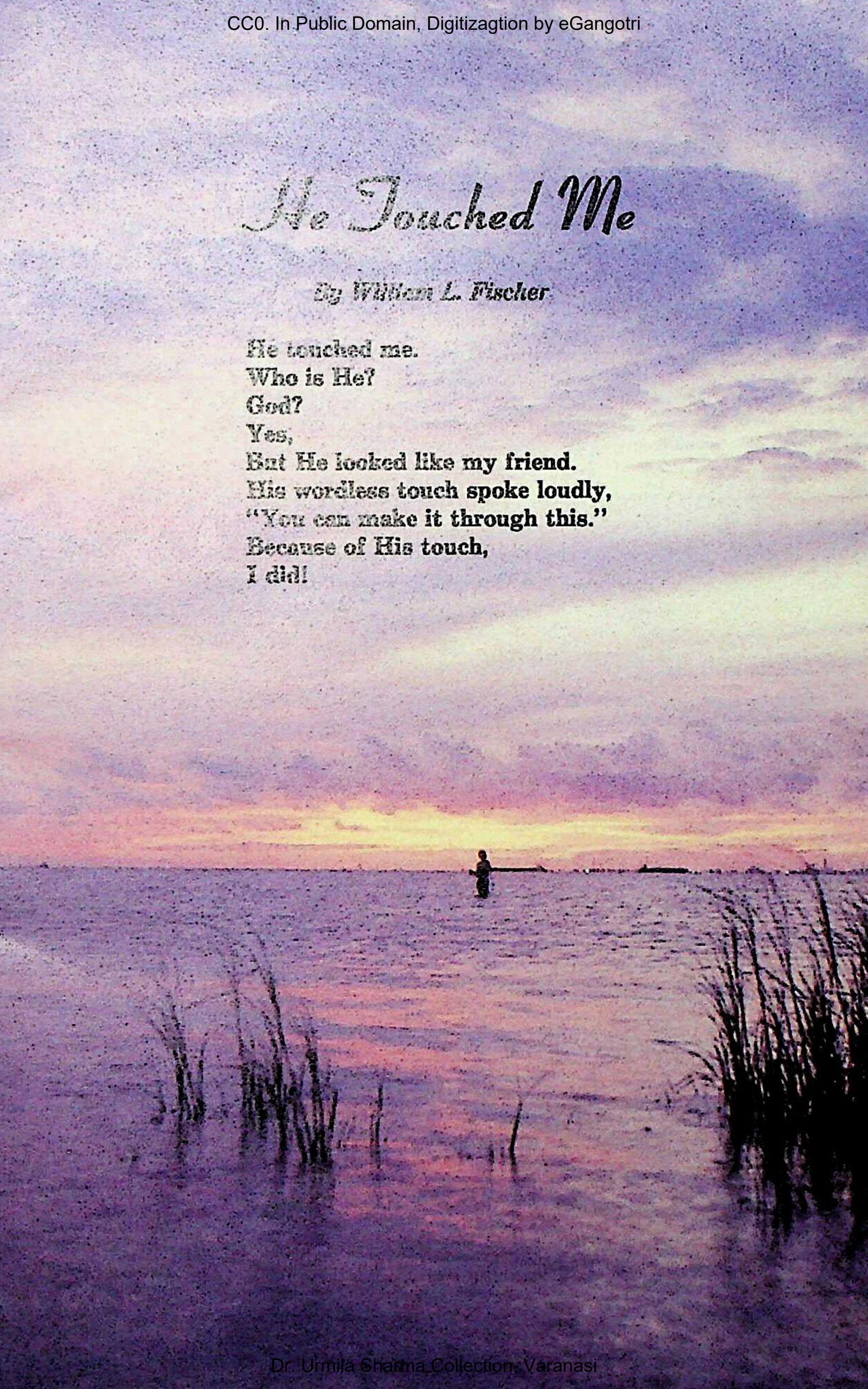
There are still far too few people in the healing industry who realize that healing is primarily a spiritual process proceeding from within outward, from the spiritual center to the circumference of the physical body. The "holistic" approach to healing is making great inroads into the problem, but there is still a long way to go.

(Continued next month)

From time to time, friends ask us to assist them in remembering this work in their wills. In response, we have now prepared a simple instruction booklet which contains much of the needed information and many suggestions. If you wish to have one of these booklets, direct your request for it to:

LEGACIES
Unity School of Christianity
Unity Village, MO 64065

Jim Olive, Texas Gulfcoast



He Touched Me

By William L. Fischer

He touched me.
Who is He?
God?
Yes,
But He looked like my friend.
His wordless touch spoke loudly,
"You can make it through this."
Because of His touch,
I did!

Good News Bulletin!

The work of Unity is founded upon the ministry of Jesus Christ. Much of His ministry involved healing of human ills. Likewise, much of the prayer work of Unity has been devoted to healing.

Unity and those who support its work have never failed to stretch their reach and expand their vision to meet humanity's healing needs.

Once again a mighty goal has been reached. Following is an open letter from Connie Fillmore, president of Unity School of Christianity, to the Unity family, in appreciation of their spirit of generosity and love.

An Open Letter to the Unity Family

Dearest Friends,

It is my great joy to pass along two wonderful pieces of information to you: first, the new Silent Unity building is going up smoothly, beautifully, and in divine order; and second, all the necessary funds have come forth to support this project. With the unfailing help of your prayers, we have surpassed our goal of $14 million.

As my consciousness expands to enfold each member of the Unity family, my thoughts travel from Unity Village to all corners of our world. No matter where you may be while you are reading these words, please know that you are one in consciousness with loving, faith-filled people all over our planet.

For more than two years now, we have been asking you to pray with us and to support us in building a new home for Silent Unity. Throughout this time, we have felt your love, your dedication, and your enthusiasm for Unity. Thank you so much for helping us to prepare the way for Silent Unity's future.

The new building will be beautiful, of course. We hope that you will be able to come see it and enjoy a moment of prayer in the meditation garden. But like everything we see around us in the outer world, the building is only a reflection of something that exists on the invisible plane. It represents Unity's ability to move forward to a time when all God's children are fully and richly blessed. The building will house people who are doing the spiritual work that helps others around the world know the power of God in their lives.

Unity's work will not be completed until every person in the world is whole, prosperous, happy, and free. We are fully dedicated to bringing God's heaven into manifestation on earth, and with your help, we move closer to this reality every day.

In a very real sense, the Silent Unity building project has been your project. It could never have happened without you: your prayers, your financial support, and your faith. My heart is filled with gratitude to you for your part in this. All gifts—spiritual and material—have been essential, and we appreciate every one.

In 1989, Unity will be celebrating its first one hundred years. As we look ahead to our second century, we see the opportunity to reach more and more of God's children with messages of light, love, and healing. We feel prepared to respond wherever and whenever anyone needs to know more of God. We move forward joyfully, with uplifted minds and inspired hearts.

Thank you, my friends. This is God's work, and you make it possible. As you send forth the gifts of your own unique consciousness, you draw back to you perfect life, absolute peace, and unlimited joy. We truly are one in Spirit. Thank you for being the incredible expression of God that you are.

In loving unity,

Connie Fillmore
President
Unity School of Christianity

Connie Fillmore

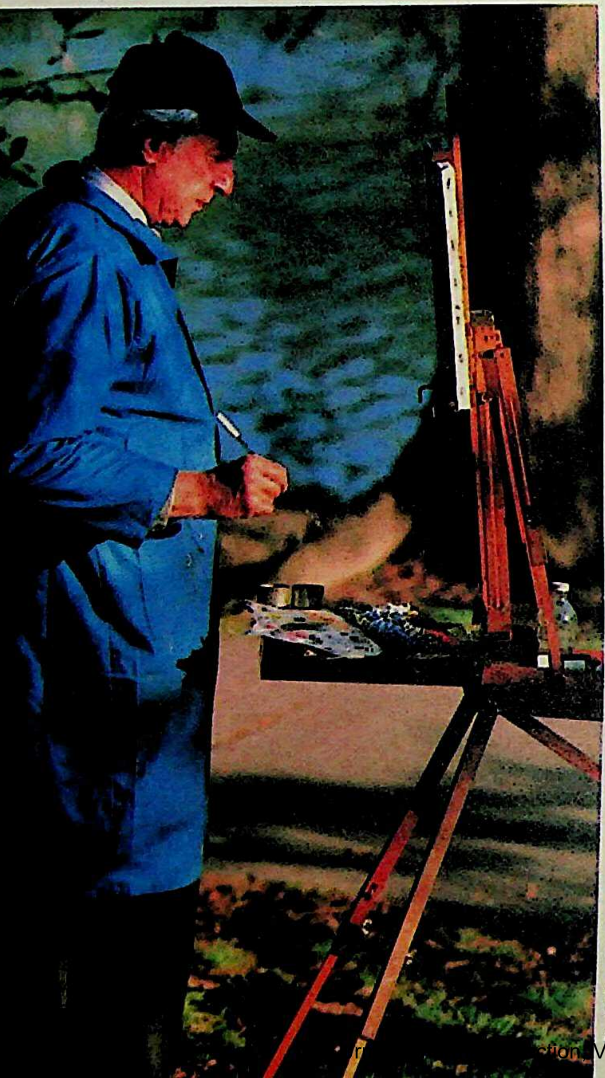
The Mind-Body Connection

The following is an interview done by *Unity* magazine with Dr. Carl Simonton.

Cancer is one of the most feared and misunderstood diseases. Within the past two decades, great strides have been taken in understanding the relationship between cancer patients' state of mind and the development and cure of cancer.

O. Carl Simonton, M.D. was a pioneer in the research that has brought to light the extent to which stress and other emotional factors impact this disease. *Unity* magazine talked with Dr. Simonton about his findings after many years of developing procedures for cancer treatment based on the mind-body connection.

In his work with cancer patients, Dr. Simonton told us, he begins by enlightening them about the nature of cancer. Historically, we have believed that cancer is a



Rudi Von Briel

If we know what we enjoy we have a clearer picture of what we perceive as life's purpose.

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powerful "monster" disease that descends on some people unannounced. We have believed that it is more powerful than any natural defense system and even immune to most of the synthetic medicines and techniques scientists have developed.

Research has revealed that far from being a self-developing, powerful disease, cancer cells are weak cells. They are present in all of us and are easily sloughed off by healthy, normal body functions.

This exciting revelation has and will continue to revolutionize the world of medicine. The problem in people who develop cancer, as opposed to those who do not, is not so much in the cancer cells themselves as in the breakdown of the body.

More and more doctors like Carl Simonton are discovering that the bodies that develop cancer have been weakened by emotional or psychological factors as well as physical factors. "Our body responds to the way we live, particularly our emotional reactions to life. We don't know how many cancer cells we normally develop during a lifetime, but it is probably thousands, if not millions—or even billions—in a normal lifetime without ever developing the disease. So, our body normally has intact mechanisms for handling this very easily and automatically," said Dr. Simonton.

This understanding, says Dr. Simonton, takes the patient out of the helpless role of "this terrible disease has descended upon me" and into the healthy-minded control position of "something that is normally in balance has gotten out of balance."

A major factor in a body's susceptibility to cancer, infectious diseases, viral diseases, or any disease is the body's basic resistance system. This system is affected by many complex factors, but Dr. Simonton believes that one of the major factors is a person's responses to prolonged fear and frustration. The important knowledge we must gain in preventing or curing cancer is that there is a natural healing mechanism in the human body. Knowing this puts us several steps ahead of the fearful, cringing belief of the recent past that cancer has more power than healthy cells. Having knowledge of the innate healing mechanism of the body leaves us free from the fear that could play a part in the development of the disease. One might say: Prolonged fear breeds frustration, which breeds cancer. But the opposite side of this coin is: Knowledge breeds faith, which breeds healthy bodies. Fear of cancer frequently becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Dr. Simonton's work is devoted to putting good-quality emotional energy back into the thoughts and lives of his patients. "This will stimulate the healing mechanism that is already in place and knows what to do to move the patient in the direction of health." If a person's emotional reaction and overall emotional state is hopelessness, helplessness, or fear, then this person is likely to give up on life, to find life without meaning. This message is then communicated to the body, whose natural health becomes compromised by this belief.

There is a need to develop a new belief system in relation to cancer, the body's ability to heal itself, and the patient's potential power in self-health.

Again, there is a sort of equation: Hopelessness stimulates careless or fatalistic thinking, which motivates careless, fatalistic habits. Such habits might include poor eating, addictive behavior, and physical inactivity. The point Dr. Simonton emphasizes is that, although the prevention and cure of cancer is complex and varies with individuals, a person's emotional state is of major importance. This is where we can begin, whether we are already experiencing cancer or are interested in preventing it.

Dr. Simonton says, "You don't have to know what's wrong with you in order to get well."

The key, then, is to focus our thinking and energy toward hopefulness. A first step is the knowledge that the body's natural defenses are stronger than cancer cells. This knowledge alone should lead thousands who have been battling the belief in the power of cancer cells to thinking and acting in healthier, more productive ways. The mind is the place to begin.

Dedicated people like Carl Simonton have already started for all of us. Their efforts have detected and revealed the reality of cancer and related diseases and have displaced the false ideas formerly held. Now it is for individuals to grasp this knowledge and to act on it for themselves. It is a matter of unlearning some wrong information and reintroducing the truth to our impressionable minds. This does not mean that we all must become physicians with detailed scientific knowledge about cells and physical organisms. As Dr. Simonton says, "You don't have to know what's wrong with you in order to get well . . . unless you have to know what's wrong with you in order to get well"—which is a matter of belief based on understanding.

What we really have to understand is the solution, not the problem, and to realize that we now have tools with which to build health consciousness.

One such tool is what Dr. Simonton calls the "play list." This is a list of at least 40 things one has fun doing. The only rule is that no item can cost more than $5. This eliminates the what's-the-use-I-can't-afford-it excuse, which is self-defeating.

Using the list is simple. When one finds oneself in a hopeless, defeated state of mind, he or she can choose one or more of the things on the list and do them. This immediately refocuses the person's mind from negativity to positivity. Thus, with the mind refocused, the body reacts to the new stimulus. Dr. Simonton is careful to point out that each person's play list is composed only of that person's individual choices.

Not only will this list be a therapeutic tool, but it will also be a good self-profile. It is vital, says Dr. Simonton, that we know what excites us or makes us feel enthusiastic and hopeful. This is one way to postulate our position or direction in life, our perception of life's meaning. After all, the simple things make up the greater part of a lifetime. If we know what we enjoy and are enthused about, we have a clearer picture of what we perceive as life's purpose.

With such foundational knowledge of self, we can move in a consciously chosen direction. This is constructive self-actualization. From here, we can move to the activity of seeking guidance from the spiritual center of self through various forms of meditation.

As Dr. Simonton views it, meditation is a means of focusing the mind away from the distraction of concerns and events around us. This is preparatory to refocusing in a positive direction. It doesn't matter, says Simonton, what form of meditation one chooses. The important thing is to clear the mind of negativity, then to refocus and to seek guidance from the creative force with which we connect through the mental process.

This might not be easy. For patients already diagnosed with cancer, their focus (often reinforced by physicians and loved ones) is on the hopelessness of their situation. It can be difficult to think of anything being joyful or exciting again. One way through this is to look into the past for things that used to make the patient feel good. Then the key is to try these things, even if it feels futile at first. Refocusing can be work, but it is necessary and rewarding in the healing process—in fact, in the overall enjoyment of life.

Often this process is so difficult that a facilitator becomes necessary. This, to a great extent, is the function of Dr. Simonton's work.

Each person is unique. For this reason, Dr. Simonton feels it is important to personalize each patient's treatment. However, all patients must be educated about the reality of cancer and the body's potential for self-treatment, and then they must refocus their minds to develop new habits based on this knowledge.

A part of this education process takes place in guided meditation. The patient is instructed to relax as much as possible. There are many ways to do this, such as regular deep breathing, or physical exercise (if the person is physically capable and comfortable). The goal is to become quiet and comfortable, to feel safe.

Then the facilitator and patient begin the process of discovering what thoughts stimulate enthusiasm and hopefulness. The next step is for the patient to imagine himself or herself healthy—imagine how it would feel, what he or she would do and think and say if perfectly healthy. In this process, enthusiasm is vital. Emotion is necessary to communicate the message of health to the body. This is why it is so important for the imaging to be tailor-made by the patient. Strong emotion is stimulated by vastly different things in different people.

Illness is a negative feedback

system. When we become ill, our bodies are telling us that we are doing, thinking, or believing something wrong (or, more likely, all three, since they are interrelated).

The wonderful news is that we can control the feedback by transforming our basic beliefs, thoughts, and acts through education, positive reinforcement, and meditation. Through meditation we gain subtle direction from the innate wisdom within us, the creative force of the universe. This will lead us toward health and life, as this is the natural state. We must learn and be who we are without repressing the self, which leads to fear and frustration, which leads to disease and early death.

Carl Simonton's philosophy of healing is simple, but not necessarily easy. One must work to change a lifetime of programmed beliefs. But Dr. Simonton's philosophy has been validated in many, many patients. "If we move in the direction of health, illness will fall away."

The Word

Mind

In today's world there are not too many frontiers left to be explored. Of those remaining, perhaps the most exciting is the frontier of the mind. Norman Cousins spoke to this in saying, "The growth of the human mind is still high adventure, in many ways the highest adventure on earth." If your life seems a bit lackluster, explore your mind. The possibilities of the human mind are infinite. But most of all they reveal the highest possibilities of life itself.

Remember, the word for this month is *mind*!

("The Word" is Unity's worldwide radio and television outreach. For more information on stations that carry "The Word" in your area, send a request to Unity Radio, Unity Village, MO 64065.)

Change Your Mind, Change Your Life

By *GERALD G. JAMPOLSKY, M.D.*, Founder and Consultant, Center for Attitudinal Healing, Tiburon, CA, and *DIANE VICTORIA CIRINCIONE*, Facilitator for AIDS and Educational Outreach Program, Center for Attitudinal Healing, Tiburon, CA.

We have found one of the chief complaints that the elderly have is that their children do not visit or call them enough. In retirement homes, we frequently hear the bitter statement, "My children only visit me on duty days, that is birthdays and holidays." Then there are others who complain that they rarely, if ever, hear from their children.

Comparisons

It is not uncommon to hear people comparing other families with their own. They often become envious when they see the love being expressed with close-knit families. They frequently become jealous and end up feeling even more alone and disgruntled than they originally were. They often seek the sympathy and agreement of others and say that their lot in life is a sad one, the world is unfair, and they give so much and are getting so little in return. This only makes matters worse.

Comparisons are a tool of the ego to keep us distant from God. There is a one-liner that we thought of that can help us resist the temptation to make comparisons. It goes like this: "Comparisons give us cancer of the soul."

Think about it for a minute. Every time we make a comparison, we are reinforcing the belief that we are separate and different from each other. We are also subtly falling into the false trap of believing that God loves some people more than others.

Measuring Love

A good way to become weary and depressed is to measure the love you think you are not

Bets Anderson Bailly/Unicorn Stock Photos receiving. Love defies measurement. Love cannot be measured by anything. It is helpful to go beyond bodies and their actions and to recognize that our children, anyone we meet, and ourselves, are more than bodies and personalities. Our true identity is love.

We are spiritual beings. We are the essence of love, a love that is ever present. Over and over we need to remind ourselves that God's love is always within us, total, complete; and that God has not and never will abandon us. To find God, we need but to look inside.

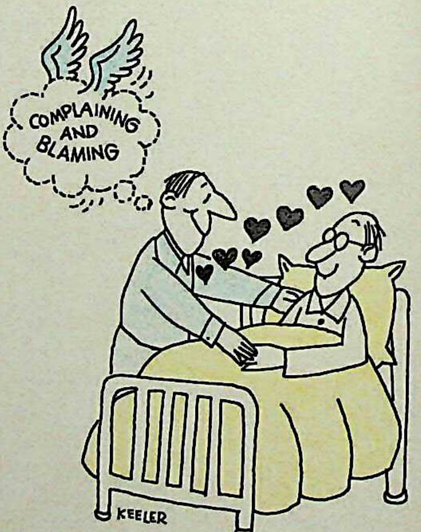
Love and Let Go

We are a reflection of God's love. God has no anger, no resentment, no envy, no complaints, no jealousy, and no comparisons. God's love is total acceptance. It is a denial of God and an illusion to think that we can be what God is not. God does not hold grievances and does not blame. God is only loving and forgiving.

We need to forgive our misperceptions of our children and ourselves. We need to recognize that we are only the light of love, the light that reflects God's love on earth. We then can view rejection as simply a misperception. It is only our ego-self that would want us to suffer and perceive rejection in this world.

When we become silent, and just for one second have a willingness to accept God's boundless love, and a willingness to return that love, we feel happy, we experience peace, and the perception of rejection disappears.

When we remember that we are always joined in the heart of God, we can then recognize that our happiness doesn't have to have anything to do



WHEN YOU HELP AND GIVE YOUR HEART TO OTHERS, THE DESIRE TO COMPLAIN AND BLAME SIMPLY DISAPPEARS.

with how often we get visits or telephone calls, or receive mail from our loved ones. It has nothing to do with "getting."

Our peace of mind has everything to do with accepting and trusting in God's love and then giving that love away. It has nothing to do with what we get from our children or anyone else.

True love, God's love, has nothing to do with duty, obligation, and the payment of old debts. It has to do with spontaneously giving our hearts away to others and having no expectations of anything coming back to us in a form to our liking.

External Innocence

Our true state of mind, our real state of being, is eternal innocence. To find peace of mind, we need to accept our innocence and the innocence of our children and everyone else.

Our ego mind will say that it is our behavior, or another person's behavior, that will determine innocence. Our egos would have us believe that rather than being eternally innocent, we are eternally guilty; so our ego would have us look for and revere guilt in ourselves and others. It would have us see the value in holding on to grievances. Holding on to our grievances is a decision to suffer; and God created us to be happy, free of pain, and devoid of suffering. Since holding on to our grievances is a decision to suffer, do we want to make an idol of our egos and hold on to grievances, or do we want to accept God's will for us, which is perfect happiness?

Holding On to Grievances

Our egos would have us go through life cherishing grievances and finding what we think are valid reasons to blame others.

The law of our ego is that when we hold on to grievances and blame others, we will not experience love; we will experience hate. We will not experience the peace of God.

It is possible to love our children and to let go of them. This means to let go of any desire or need to control our children or anyone else. It means to be a reflection of God. It is to love all our children, all God's children, unconditionally for what they are, not for what they may or may not do. It means to see only eternal innocence in all our children, including ourselves.

We can't really do that unless we accept God's unconditional love in ourselves.

Within each month's article we will have a lesson. The lesson for the month will be very practical. By choosing to apply the lesson each day, for one month, you will be amazed at how much your life can change. You will be a witness to yourself that changing your mind can change your life. This month's lesson has to do with changing your mind about holding on to grievances and blaming others.

Lesson One

"Today I will see no value in holding on to grievances and blaming others or myself."

We would like to tell you the true story of Henry to exemplify this month's lesson. Henry is a sixty-seven-year-old widower in a retirement home. He has two sons and one daughter. His children are quite successful and busy in their own lives. On the rare occasions that they visited, Henry would complain to them, with bitterness, about his circumstances and the rarity of their visits. Henry was much absorbed in himself, and really had not made much of an effort to reach out to others in the retirement home.

After we began our group meetings on attitudinal healing, he began to see the value in not complaining and making others feel guilty. He became interested in helping other people who were physically more limited than himself. He decided to put his trust in God and became a messenger of God's love.

Henry also began to see the value in forgiving his children, and he began to compliment them on their great success in life. And, yes, his children began to visit him more frequently. Henry really made a decision to be happy and not to suffer. He found that it is never too late to turn your life over to God.

Love holds no grievances. The moment we decide to hold on to grievances, to blame others or ourselves, and to be vindictive, conflict and distress rush in and the experience of peace and love disappears.

We need to remind ourselves that there is no one to blame. We can choose to remember, throughout the day, that it is not other people whom we need to change but only the thoughts in our own mind.

Today I see no value in getting angry and blaming others

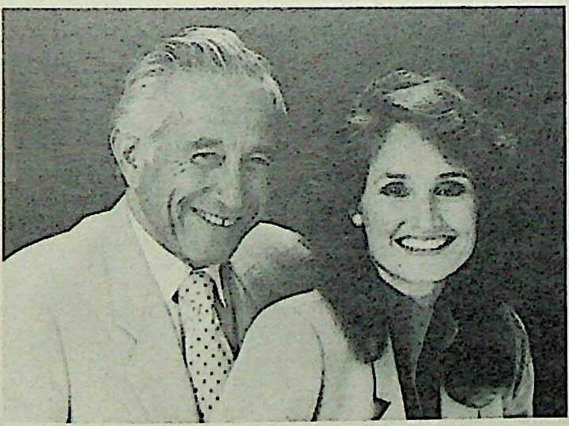
for not living up to my expectations.

Today I will let go of self-judgment where I have seen myself as inadequate and not worthy of love.

Today I truly want peace of mind with all my heart. I know that I can achieve that state by letting go of guilt and not blaming others or myself.

We would like to suggest that:

1. You write this month's lesson on a sheet of paper and carry it around with you.
2. Read the lesson first thing each morning.
3. Have a few moments of silence in the morning and let the content of the statement reach every aspect of your being.
4. Be determined to apply the lesson to situations that come up for you during your activities.
5. In the middle of each day, for a few minutes, study the lesson again.
6. Do your best to apply the lesson to all situations.
7. Have a happy, peaceful month; enjoy yourself; love yourself and others; and remind yourself how much God loves you.



Gerald G. Jampolsky, M.D. is a noted psychiatrist and international lecturer, as well as author of *Love Is Letting Go of Fear*, *Teach Only Love*, *Good-bye to Guilt*, the *Mini Course for Healing Relationships*, and *My Fight with God* (Bantam, March 1989). Diane Victoria Cirincione is a private entrepreneur and international lecturer, as well as Founder and Director of "Women in Transition" seminars. The authors are co-directors of the international project Children as Teachers of Peace. They are co-workers in the Educational Outreach Program at the Center for Attitudinal Healing, Tiburon, CA, as well as co-authors of the tape series, *Creating Positive Relationships*, published by Nightingale Conant, Chicago, IL.

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How long is eternity?

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By James Dillet Freeman

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PRAYER POWER

Excerpts from letters to Silent Unity, quoted with permission of the writers.

With God's Help

Dear Silent Unity: My granddaughter has had three major operations in the last eight months. With God's help and your prayers, she has come through them all in fine shape.

She is home from the hospital now and is taking care of her two small sons. Her husband has found a good job, and things are looking much brighter, for which we are all thankful.

—*V.B., California*

Knowing the Power of Prayer

Dear Silent Unity Friend: You'll never know how much your calm voice yesterday afternoon brought a measure of sanity into my life. I called you when I was in shock. On my left ankle was a small spot, which I had had for ten years, that was diagnosed as incurable cancer, and the future I was expected to have included much pain and a permanent limp—and oh, how I love to walk!

After I hung up the phone, I went to sit down and sort out my prospects when it suddenly came to me—I did not have to rely on the word of an unknown lab technician and an almost equally unknown doctor: I knew I was the child of God and so had two perfect legs. Instantly I felt better than I have in weeks, having put my fate into the hands of the Lord.

I am a lifelong Unity student, as were my mother and grandmother, and I know the power of prayer. You'll hear from me again. —*J.D., Florida*

Healing for a Friend

Dear Friends at Silent Unity: Recently I called you to pray with me for my friend. I'm proud to say he is much better. The doctors say he has no malignancy. What a relief it is to know this.

Thank you so much, especially the lady who prayed such a consoling prayer with me.

—*L.H., Kentucky*

To call for prayer help, phone (816) 251-2100. (If you have an urgent need and have no means of paying for a call, dial our toll-free number: 1-800-669-7729.)

I tried to hide my growing fears from everyone as best I could, using the million-and-one excuses I became so proficient at.

Agoraphobia: A Chain of Fear

BY FRANCINE GORSLINE

ANY OF YOU who have ever experienced the symptoms of agoraphobia know that the very word can strike a chord of impending doom. About ten years ago, long before the word *agoraphobia* had become one of the popular subjects of talk shows and magazine articles, I began to have my first panic attacks.

I don't know what prompted them. I only know they became more and more frequent. I felt that my soul was bound by chains of fear. I had never heard of such a thing as agoraphobia. I thought I was having a nervous breakdown or had some serious brain disorder. I went along suffering in silence for a long time, becoming more and more reclusive and unable to be the outgoing person

This Kwakiutl indian symbol implies *strength*. It was put in front of houses as a guardian.

Franklyn E. Stevens, Stanley Park, Vancouver

everyone had come to know.

I had always been involved in the school activities of my two small sons. I helped with school parties and even taught nutrition for my son's health class. I was a Brownie co-leader for a year. Not having any daughters, I found this to be a lot of fun. I taught Sunday school at our Unity church for several years, always choosing the preschool or kindergarten ages that I loved. I felt creative, confident, and grateful for all the good in my young and busy life. However, these attacks became more frequent and severe. They sometimes happened in the midst of trying to teach a class of four-year-olds about God's love for all His children. I became increasingly fearful and began to withdraw with greater frequency. I tried to hide my growing fears from everyone as best I could, using the million-and-one excuses I became so proficient at.

I began to refuse invitations to social functions or to help at school. I had always been the organizer for various neighborhood parties, and I couldn't even do that anymore. Simple lunches with longtime friends brought on waves of panic. I even had to stop teaching my beloved Sunday-school class. I felt like such a failure. I had no idea how or why this "thing" had happened to me or what I could do. I just did not know how to handle the horrible engulfing terror that would wash over me unannounced. I didn't even have to be away from the security of my own home for the attacks to hit.

I felt I had to find "me" again. Somehow I had to renew my faith and trust in divine love—the love I once knew sustained me. I had to look beyond this veil of fear and know God's hand was outstretched toward me, and if I could only reach it, all would be well. This wasn't easy, as the physical symptoms were so much stronger than my faith—or so they seemed.

During this time, I had several physical examinations, including various brain scans, and so on. There seemed to be no medical reason for my symptoms. I was given Valium from time to time, but I found I could not function when I took it and I still had a family to care for. Physicians couldn't help me, so I was on my own again. But not really. God had never abandonded me. I know that now.

My husband was an up-and-coming young engineer, and we were required to attend a variety of social functions. I had always rather enjoyed dressing up and having an evening away from the children now and then. I hadn't found it too difficult to fit in socially, and I was becoming acquainted with a few of the wives of my husband's colleagues. With the onset of agoraphobia all that changed. Although we only attended a few social events each year, now every invitation would throw me into a panic. I would become fearful, tense, and worried weeks before an event occurred. I remember one particular holiday party. I was determined to go. I told myself I would trust in my inner strength to get me through.

I had bought a beautiful new dress, and I was completely dressed and ready to go when I began to shake. My heart was pounding nearly out of my chest; I felt sick to my stomach and light-headed, and I hadn't even left home! I simply could not go. I tried to explain to my husband, but he left for the party alone, angry with me.

The rest of the evening was spent in tears and torment. What a failure I was! How could I have allowed this to happen? What was wrong with me? Was I losing my mind?

I was able to attend a few of these activities. However, I had to concentrate on getting through the evening without passing out or running from the room as if demons were after me. Of course, I felt that all eyes were on me, waiting for me to do just such foolish things. But from time to time I managed to answer a few personal questions coherently. Usually I simply sat there with what I hoped was a pleasant smile plastered on my face.

Gradually I grew strong enough in my trust in God's love to be able to go on quick grocery trips or very short errands.

My marriage was under a great deal of stress, and our relationship began to change after these attacks. I became more withdrawn, and my husband began to attend the social events alone or else not go at all. I tried to make him understand what I was experiencing, and I believe he did try, but I could feel his resentment and his disappointment with me. I hated myself and didn't know what to do. My once-strong faith seemed an eternity away. I felt so alone, and it seemed no one could understand.

It was during this time that I began to read any book on metaphysics I could get my hands on. Because my driving skills were also affected by my illness, I would sometimes ask a friend to drive me several miles across town to the Unity bookstore. As quickly as possible, lest I should let the dear lady at the desk witness one of my panic attacks, I would fill my arms with books that would surely heal this awful fear.

When the children were at school and my husband at work, I would read for hours, praying and trying to trust God to get me through this. I also found many spiritual, inspirational cassette tapes to be most beneficial in this process. Some days or evenings I just could not read, so I would lie quietly and open my heart to the Holy Spirit and listen to the tapes.

This slow process took about five years, but gradually I grew strong enough in my trust in God's love to be able to go on quick grocery trips or very short errands. I would be very proud of myself, but also totally exhausted by the constant need to keep affirming that together God and I would see this thing through. You see, I still had a long way to go, but there was progress and I was grateful.

At about this time, the word *agoraphobia* came to my attention. I found it impossible to listen to others describe their panic symptoms, as my own were still so vivid in my mind and I had been somewhat successful in covering mine over with affirmations. It seemed that every talk show and every woman's magazine I saw dealt with this subject. I knew I had much more work to do.

Rather than switch off the television whenever the subject arose, I began an experiment. I would listen to others describe their terror and I would hold them in the same thoughts of Truth that I knew for myself. So many had turned to prescription drugs or therapy of some form. Like these sufferers, I had not known where to turn or to whom. I did know this problem would not go away on its own, so I had turned to the only source I knew—God.

The process continued and my spiritual awareness grew. When I would feel a panic attack beginning, I would stop and close my eyes and allow the allness of God to fill my mind. This was in no way an overnight accomplishment. It took a lot of prayer and a strong desire to be the me that I knew God had intended. I would not accept fear as part of my divine inheritance. If I was indeed a child of God, then there could be no cause for fear in any form.

It wasn't enough to heal myself, but in seeking the healing of others I found my own.

Slowly, I came to think of God in a different way. He was no longer "something out there" I prayed to or at. Instead, I prayed to understand my relationship with God or the Divine. I didn't want to feel like a struggling, abandoned little child. I wanted always to feel the safety of God's omnipresent love. I wanted, once and for all, to let go of fear and the terror called *agoraphobia*. I no longer wanted this for myself alone, I wanted it for everyone.

This was the turning point for me. I knew I was on my way to a long-awaited healing. I knew that it wasn't enough to be free of this unknown panic. I had to want freedom for others as well. It began in little ways at first, with the grocery clerk, the postman, or a stranger on the street. I would think of these dear ones as not really separate from me, but as my brothers and sisters, all of us belonging to the same divine family.

I let myself have some fun with this, and it became like a game. I began to go out more and more and would actually forget myself and my fears. Can you imagine the joy I would feel when I would realize I had been away from home much longer than I had been in years and had actually forgotten my fear? I was working hard to see through the facade of grocery clerk, postman, and so on, all separate and feeling their own forms of pain and anguish. I continued to work to see the God within them and to feel the oneness. I began to see through the skin and into the child that I knew God had created. God could not make His beloved to suffer fear of any kind. My fears stemmed from my feelings of separation from God and from my brothers and sisters—my divine family. With this new idea came the dawning of more. It wasn't enough to heal myself, but in seeking the healing of others I found my own.

With renewed courage and trust, I began to accept a few invitations to luncheons, to have people to our home, and to go to some metaphysical workshops offered in our community. At times I was free of anxiety, but at other times, it was all I could do to hang onto my chair during lectures and not go running out. I found that the more often I made myself go to these activities and the more I would pray for the others in the room who might be feeling the same way I felt, the easier it became. I became more joy-filled. I started to make new friends and to share Truth ideas. I looked forward to each new meeting. I became more like my former self. I was able to attend social functions with my husband again. I was even able to host a Christmas open house for my husband's department. This was quite a challenge, but it became easier as the evening wore on and I continued to practice my new-found strength.

My healing was not complete until a very special person came into my life. She was in great need of help with her daily duties. In addition to a full-time job, she also taught some evening metaphysical classes. Something within me reached beyond my own fears and offered her any help I might be able to give. To me these were simple things such as shopping and errands, preparing meals and straightening her apartment. She was too busy doing for others, and she hadn't the time for these things. Although I was doing routine tasks for her, I was accomplishing far greater for myself. This was truly healing for me: to be able to go into another's home and to allow the divine within me to reach out to her need and forget my own.

Each time I would help my friend, she would say, "You have such a loving touch. You make me and my whole apartment feel loved." She suggested that I consider doing the same thing for others. I needed to give this some serious thought, as I was still working through some remaining shreds of fear. Would I be able to put into practice the many blessings I had received over the past ten years? Yes, because now I had come to think of this trial of agoraphobia as a blessing in disguise. Perhaps if I had continued on my merry way, I would not have been forced to stop and take a deeper look at myself and my relationship to God and to other people.

It is with the deepest love and gratitude for the power of the Divine that I took my friend's suggestion. I have created a small business called "The Loving Touch," which offers help around the home to persons who need it. Doing their grocery shopping and errands, I find myself dashing all over town in my car and dealing with a variety of situations that once would have caused me much anxiety. Such joy fills my heart when I remember that just a few short years ago I couldn't walk to my mailbox without a great deal of struggle and many affirmations of God's goodness and allness.

Before I meet new clients, I pray that I will be a channel through which the Divine can be expressed. I hope that in some small measure I can help them to heal their fears and ease their sense of need.

I still have some fear from time to time, but I look it straight in the eye and know its nothingness in the face of God. I go forward each day with new joy, learning to see the divinity in all; knowing that another's divinity only mirrors my own. I believe that my fears stemmed from my feelings of being separated from God and forgetting who I really am. I had lost that sense of oneness with God and His divine family that now I know nurtures and protects me.

During my recovery I clung to a number of Bible verses. One that helped me the most was Romans 8:38-39: "For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God."

To me, that includes agoraphobia!

Francine Gorsline loves being a homemaker and sharing her love with people who simply don't have time to do special homey touches themselves. She has a growing business that offers grocery, errand, and general-need services. She says, "I love helping people, especially senior citizens." She shares her life with her husband of 19 years, two teenage sons, and their 200-pound St. Bernard, Fritz.

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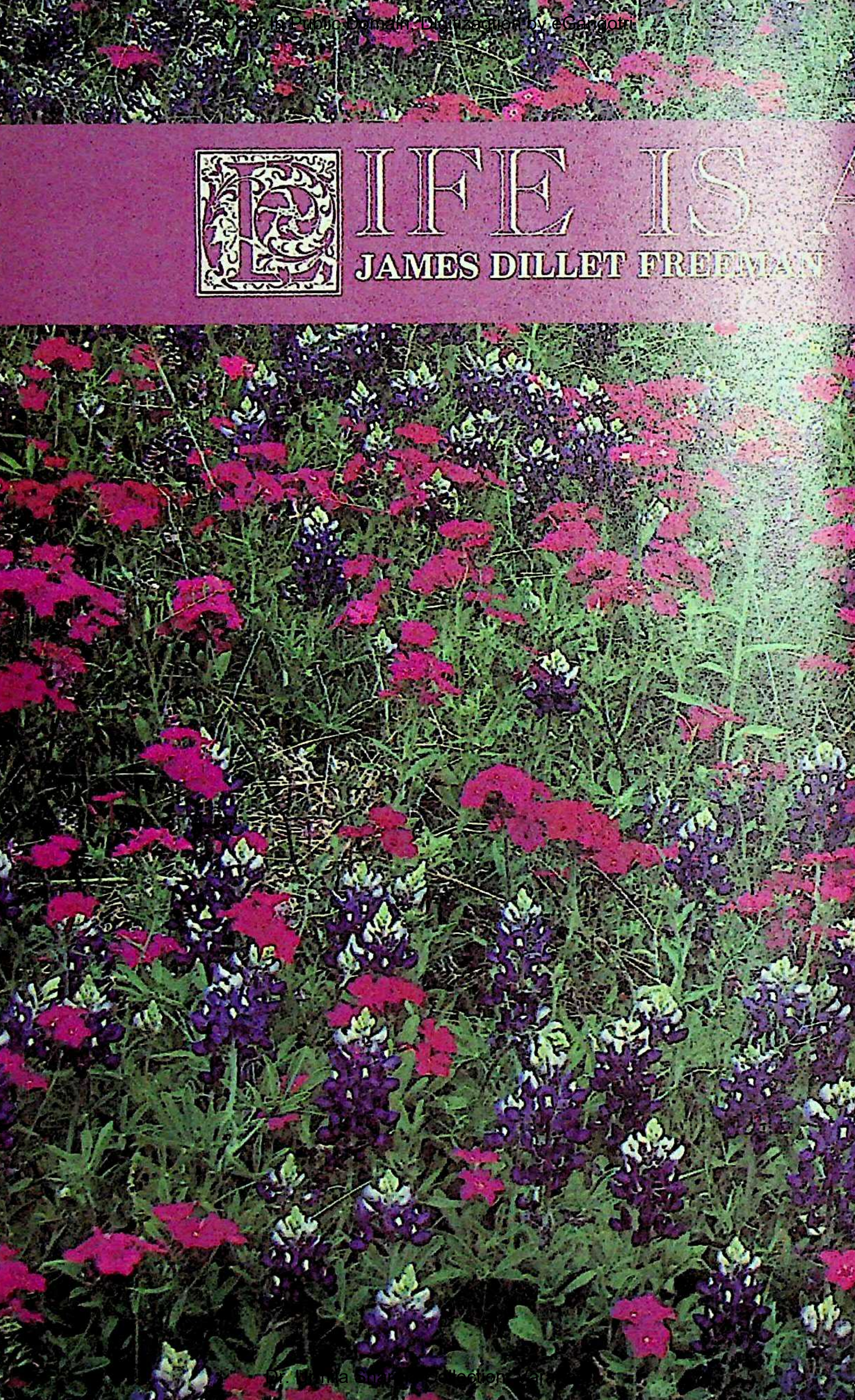

LIFE IS A

JAMES DILLET FREEMAN

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WONDER

James Dillet Freeman

Pamela Yearsley, editor of *Unity* magazine, has asked me if this month I would write about healing, as she wanted the August issue to be a healing magazine. I served in Silent Unity for more than fifty years, and during all those years I have written I don't know how many pieces about healing—prayers, letters, pamphlets, articles, some signed James Dillet Freeman, many more signed Silent Unity. For many years, this column was called "A Message From Silent Unity," and it was always accompanied by letters that contained reports of healing through prayer. So, I thought this time I would relate a few personal anecdotes in connection with healing.

Many years ago when I first began to speak for Unity, I was asked to make the talk at the Sunday service at Unity Village Chapel. I had a carefully prepared speech entitled "One Step More." But when I got to the Silent Unity Visitors Chapel, which was where the Sunday services were held then, the lady in charge of the Sunday school came to me and said, "Jim, there's a couple here who have driven more than a hundred miles to be here this morning. The man is very much in need of healing. Would you come and speak to them for a minute?"

When I did this, I could see that the man was greatly in need; his wife told me she had driven him here in desperate hope that he could find healing help.

A few minutes later I found myself sitting on the platform wondering whether I was going to speak on "One Step More" or whether I dared to take one step more, throw away my prepared speech, and speak about healing. I have always prayed when I have a speech to make that there will be somebody in the audience who needs to hear what I have to say. In this case I knew there were at least two people who desperately needed to hear a speech about healing. I sweated it out through the announcements, through the hymns, through the prayers and meditations. I was scared, but I thought, I've been in Silent Unity fifteen years, and every day I've prayed for healing. When at last I stepped forward to the pulpit, I found myself speaking about healing.

I remember this occasion because the couple wrote to me that after they went home the man had been healed.

Unity began as a healing movement, although it is probably an exaggeration to say that it began as a movement. I think it began out of the need of Charles and Myrtle Fillmore to find healing for themselves. But the healing they found for themselves they were able to help others to find, too. For a hundred years, thousands—no, millions—of persons have written to Unity and asked for prayers for healing. Through the fifty years I served in Silent Unity, I read letters that told of healings so remarkable and extraordinary they defied belief—any belief, at least, except Silent Unity's belief.

I have always been a healthy person, but I remember the first time I ever prayed seriously for my own healing. I was on a long trip with friends and one night I became very ill. One of my friends told me she was sure I was having a heart attack. When you are fifteen hundred miles from home, you don't want someone to tell you that (or even when you are home).

When I got home I was still having a lot of unpleasant sensations in what I imagined was the area of my heart, so I went to a doctor. When I described my symptoms, he shook his head gravely and mumbled that I had a cardiac something or other. He mumbled so that I didn't catch his exact words, but I didn't ask him to repeat them, because he went on to say, "I have another patient, a young lawyer who has the same condition you have. He wishes he had made other financial arrangements for his wife and children."

Then he ordered me to take a series of examinations that would take five days to complete. During those five days I learned to pray. I prayed during every waking moment, night and day.

I had two prayers. One of them was the great statement from Psalms, "Be still and know that I am God." The second prayer I used when something happened that made me angry or anxious. This prayer was simply, "What difference does it make?" It is amazing how often I discovered it didn't.

At the end of the five days the doctor apologetically informed me that there was nothing wrong with my heart. In fact, he said that the tests showed I had an unusually robust heart, like an athlete's. I am not an athlete.

Recently I read a study by the Gerontology Research Center of the National Institute on Aging in Bethesda, Maryland, that showed that opera singers maintain the circulation and breathing of younger, well-conditioned athletes. The doctors ascribe the healthy condition of the singers to the fact that they have learned how to breathe properly. They breathe diaphragmatically. I am no better singer, as my friends will assure you, than I am an athlete. But most of my life I have been a diaphragmatic breather.

A few years ago I had to be in a hospital, and a young intern came around carrying a tube with a small plastic ball in it. He asked me to breathe into the tube and see how long I could keep the ball bouncing in the air. I asked him what this was supposed to show, and he told me it would show my "vital capacity." After I took the test, he told me, "You have the largest vital capacity of anyone I've ever tested in this hospital. How do you account for that?"

My wife happened to be there, and she said, "It's because he's full of hot air." But I could have told him it was because I am a Unity student.

I have always felt that health is our natural condition. Our bodies are working constantly in ways we have no awareness of to make and keep us healthy. Health has to be the will of a God who is love, intelligence, and life.

Are you really conscious of your toes unless you deliberately think about them? One time . . . the little toe of my right foot inadvertently encountered the leg of my sofa, and I became howlingly aware that I had a toe as I sat down screaming on the floor.

Doctors like long Greek and Latin words. They like indecipherable prescriptions; such terms help to give them an authoritative mystique.

The dictionary defines *homeostasis* as "a relatively stable state of equilibrium or a tendency toward such a state between the different but interdependent elements or groups of elements of an organism or group." (The dictionary is sometimes the last place to look to find out what a word means.) I think what doctors and dictionaries are trying to say is that when we are healthy, everything in us—every tissue, every organ, every cell, every physical factor and function, is doing what it ought to be doing, no more, no less, nothing failing to do its part, nothing overstepping its bounds, so that my liver does what my liver is supposed to do, my heart what my heart is supposed to do, and so on. In fact, everything is working so smoothly together we don't know anything is working.

When we are truly healthy, I don't think we are aware of our bodies. It is almost as if they were not there. Only when our body begins to hurt us do we become aware that we have a body. I don't know I have a throat until it gets sore, or a nose until it starts to run. Are you really conscious of your toes unless you deliberately think about them? One time when my grandson was three years old he was chasing me around the house when suddenly the little toe of my right foot inadvertently encountered the leg of my sofa, and I became howlingly aware that I had a toe as I sat down screaming on the floor.

I became very aware of how natural health is and how our body works to produce it one time when I was hammering a nail—I am not an expert carpenter—and instead of hitting the nail I was trying to hit, I hit my thumbnail. I immediately called on God (though I don't believe it was in prayer). However, as I watched the black mark move out from the base of the nail where the blow had landed, to the point where finally I cut it off when I clipped the nail—it took two months—I felt that I had been given an opportunity to watch the wonderful healing power of my body at its secret work.

Our body is almost like an unknown land. Very few of us have any idea what goes on inside it. We breathe, we drink, we eat, and our body without any conscious direction from us—or even awareness of what is happening—carries on its operations.

Most of us, unless we are doctors or biologists, have only the haziest notion of what the various inward parts of us look like or where they are. I suspect this may be just as well.

I still remember the first spiritual healing I witnessed. I had been asked for the first time to teach a class in the Unity Training School at Unity Village. (It is now called the Continuing Education Program). The class was based on one of Mr. Fillmore's books, probably *Christian Healing*.

At the time I had gone through some experiences that had given me a tremendous sense of a great truth—I think it is the central truth that Unity is based on: life is consciousness. When we change our consciousness, when we change the mental frame of reference in which and by which we abide, change the mental and emotional factors that govern our thinking and behavior, only then can we change the conditions of our life.

It does not make any difference whether or not we know what these factors are, it does not make any difference whether or not we want to change the conditions of our life, when consciousness changes, life changes.

Charles Fillmore taught that we have twelve powers. The life we live is the result of the unfoldment of these powers. He used to tell how people would come to him and ask him to change their lives, change their jobs, change their husbands or wives, change their finances, change the state of their health, in fact, change everything but their minds, and that, he said, was the only thing they could change. But that, he also said, is the only thing they need to change. When they change that, everything changes.

I pray for healing. When I feel sick, I pray even more vigorously. I use healing affirmations; I even use song-prayers like

"I'm healed, praise God, I'm
healed,
Through Jesus Christ I'm
healed,
Through God, the everlasting
good,
I'm healed, praise God, I'm
healed."

However, I have always thought of healing not so much in terms of bodily healing as in terms of consciousness. I feel that sickness is a reaction to life—a reaction to myself, to other people, to the world around me. Even worse, it is a socially acceptable reaction. Sickness will probably bring me sympathy instead of criticism. If I got drunk, people would feel sorry for my wife. If I get sick, people feel sorry for me; I can even feel sorry for myself. My wife comes and holds my head.

**Unity Churches, Centers,
and Teachers**

If you would like to know the location of your nearest Unity church or center, and cannot find it listed in your telephone directory, please write to The Association of Unity Churches, P. O. Box 610, Lee's Summit, MO 64063. They will be glad to give you any desired information about Unity churches or classes in your vicinity.

At the time I was teaching that first class in the Training School, I put the truth I had found in simple words: You learn to be you. You are not something fixed; you are something growing. If you don't like what you have become, you can change it. How? By changing your thoughts, your words, your actions, by changing you.

During my class, we had long periods of prayer and meditation where I tried to get people to realize the truth about themselves, realize that they had access to God and His infinite power.

After one of my classes, a lady came up to me. She was weeping. She held out her hands to me. "Look!" she said as she slowly opened and closed the fingers of her hands, "This is the first time in five years that I have been able to move my hands like this."

Years later a girl who had been in the class came back to Unity Village and asked me if I remembered how I had helped her to take off her glasses. I couldn't remember this. But when I did recall my experience with the girl, I remembered that I had not been interested in whether or not she wore glasses. This girl had so pitiful a sense of her own lack of worth that when she saw friends coming down the street toward her she would cross over to the other side so she would not have to greet them. What I was trying to do was to get her to take off the dark glasses that she had clamped on her soul, that gave her such a distorted view of herself. I wanted her to get a clear vision of herself and see that she was a beautiful child of God.

I recall yet one more incident connected with this class. I had had several counseling sessions with a beautiful young woman who had many problems. At one of these I could see that she was even more disturbed than usual.

"What's wrong?" I asked.

"I don't know," she said, "but look. My tongue has turned black." She stuck out her tongue. To my alarm I could see that it had turned black. For a few minutes I tried with all my might to think of some powerful affirmation that would work on such a dire condition. Suddenly I had a healing inspiration.

All of us, students and teachers, ate lunch together. I asked her, "You didn't happen to have the blueberry pie for dessert, did you?"

"Yes, I did," she said. That was an instance of instantaneous healing.

I hope you don't mind my ending this piece on a humorous note. Laughter has healing power. ◉

Suicide: I Almost Lost My Child!

BY GRACE WESLEY

JANUARY 18 was circled on my calendar last year because I planned to entertain birthday guests. That date will be etched in my memory forever because it was the day my daughter tried to take her own life.

At age 29, Mary (not her real name) *appeared* to be living the American dream of the 80s. She was working toward her master's degree in business administration. She had been promoted to department head for a rising company. And she and her boyfriend of many years were making plans to marry. So when I noticed her increasing absences at church, I soothed my worries with her accomplishments: Didn't she make the dean's list every semester? Wasn't she involved in community activities? Didn't she spend much of her free time helping those less fortunate? How could I fault her when her time was obviously being spent in such good works? Christ Himself had taught that people were to be known by the "fruits of their labor."

So, when Mary did not promptly arrive for the birthday luncheon or answer our calls, I saw no real reason for concern. With her schedule, she was usually late, often running errands en route.

But hours later when she still hadn't answered the phone, I decided that someone should check on her. My sister and a family friend left immediately for Mary's house, just four miles away. It would be many hours, though, before I received their shattering call from the hospital.

They found her unconscious in the garage, the automobile running, her body slumped across the front seat. On the steering wheel was an apologetic note that ended with the ominous warning: "Only death will suffice to extinguish the pain."

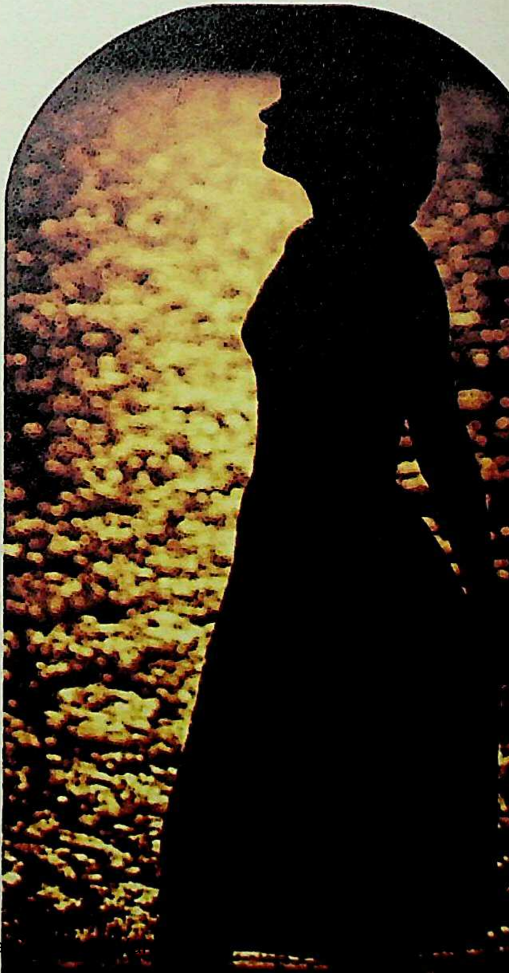
Once the emergency medical technicians were finally able to restart her breathing, she was rushed to the nearest hospital. For the next hour and a half the doctors worked furiously on her in the emergency room. When the immediate danger had passed, they transferred her to intensive care where she could be constantly observed. Carbon monoxide poisoning can cause permanent heart and lung damage, so she was attached to a heart monitor and given inhalation therapy.

Miraculously, no damage could be found, and Mary was released the following day. (Because the police had chosen not to arrest her for attempting suicide, she was released to us.) But the head nurse's dire warning followed us out: "I feel she will try again, and you might not be so lucky next time."

Indeed, as the nurse put it, we had been lucky! (Or, as I believe, divinely spared.) When found, Mary had been unconscious and had stopped breathing. And she had been discovered almost by accident! Just a few minutes' delay and . . . a year later, I still couldn't bear to follow that line of thought.

I began to read everything available on suicide and found, to my horror, that it is a leading cause of death among Americans, the number two cause of death among teenagers. The suicide rate has more than tripled in the last three decades! While there is a high murder rate in this country, even more people kill themselves than kill others. Surprisingly, most are not mentally ill.

Looking back, I could see there had been clues to my daughter's intentions. She had begun trying to put everything



Paul A. Pavlik

in order: returning borrowed items, furiously cleaning her house, even hunting all her legal documents. Most importantly, she had lost faith in her relationship with God. Then her spirits suddenly rose, as if a heavy weight had been lifted from her shoulders. She even sent her fiancé a goodbye gift the morning she attempted suicide!

I learned that she had doubted my love for her, had withdrawn from her fiancé and friends, hated her job and her classes, and was financially trapped. She had lived in a world totally alien to the one we had seen or had imagined for her. The trusting family relationship I thought we had, Mary had simply not experienced. It was a shattering revelation: Mary had not felt there was one person in the world she could turn to, and she no longer communicated with God.

Since that time I have spoken with five other families who encountered similar tragedies. All had the same story to tell. As one mother put it so well, "We looked only for the things we wanted to see . . . ."

Although I desperately wanted to pretend it had not happened, I felt that discussing whatever had caused her to prefer death would be therapeutic, for me as well as for Mary. What had gone wrong? Where had her father and I failed her? What had been lacking in our Christian home? Why, why, why?

"Oh, Mom," she replied, with infinite sadness, "I've been planning to kill myself since I was a little girl."

She visited daily . . . always bringing something for us—food or a gag gift to make us laugh. All the time she had been crying inside? Worse, I hadn't had even the slightest hint that she was suffering.

"You can't mean that!" I gasped. "Why, you're the most successful young person I know! You're number one in everything you do. I've always been proud of you!"

"That was the only reason I was number one—so you'd be proud of me and love me! I knew that if I ever failed . . . ." Tears spilled down her cheeks, and she looked away. "I hate my life, Mom. I hate it! Every morning I'm disappointed to find that I've lived through another night. Sometimes I go into the bathroom at work just to cry."

I shook my head. None of this could be real; I must have suffered a breakdown myself. The Mary I knew possessed boundless energy, loved life and living it. She visited her father and me daily, always bringing something for us—food or a gag gift to make us laugh. And all the time she had been crying inside? Worse, I hadn't had even the slightest hint that she was suffering. I had just assumed that a mother would instinctually know if her child were in trouble.

"But we've always loved you. We've always told you . . . ."

Succeed! we had told her. Compete! we had told her. I had read the works of many child psychologists to learn how to motivate my child for success in a harsh and competitive world, but not one had mentioned that love should be independent of success or failure, that it should be freely and unconditionally given rather than something to be earned. Consequently, Mary had interpreted my love as just another reward for a fine performance. Had that also been her attitude toward God?

The suicide attempt happened a year ago, but we've come light-years in our relationship since then. Although I "walked on eggshells" the first few months after January for fear of upsetting Mary, I soon realized that an honest reaction was the key to communication, not a forced surface calm. She responded with an honest outpouring of troubles and tears.

There are those in the family who feel that Mary has relaxed her ambitions. I am happy to agree that she has.

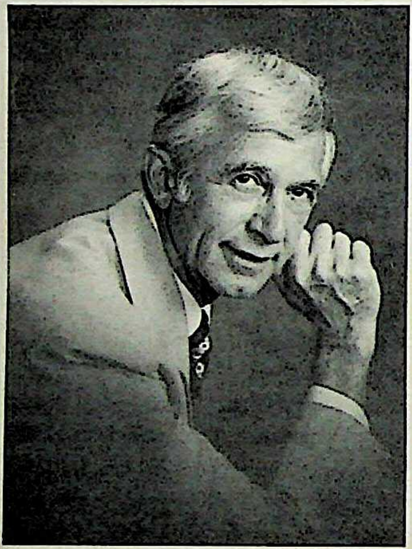
She resigned from that definite management job to pursue the challenge of free-lance writing. She sent an expensive sports car back to the dealer. She decided to take just one college course per semester, working toward a whole new major.

Sometimes when we visit her, we find her watching a sunset when she "should" be studying or writing. Often we just sit and talk while household chores go untended.

It's all a matter of priorities. Mary found that true success comes from a priority alignment that places God and people first, and accomplishments a distant second. ●

More Power to You

By Charles Roth



You can live a richly satisfying and happy life. Charles Roth explains that within each of us is the same miracle-working power that moved through Jesus: the indwelling spirit of God.

The spirit of God within is always available to help us know:

- What is for our highest good.
- How to achieve our hearts' desires.
- How to find a sense of peace.
- What to do if things seem to be going wrong.
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More Power to You assures you that, even as you seek to draw ever closer to God, the power within is working also to establish a life for you that is more wonderful than you can imagine. Give this helpful book to friends who may be facing challenges, and make sure you buy a copy for yourself.

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Pray With Silent Unity

The following affirmations are written in Silent Unity. They are used throughout the Unity movement as points of agreement upon which the widespread Unity community of prayer can meet in prayer. They are printed in both *Daily Word* and *Unity* magazines, distributed to Unity centers, and used in all Silent Unity prayer times. When you repeat these affirmations, you are joining thousands in the same good thoughts. What power this has in establishing universal good! Accompanying the affirmations in *Unity* magazine are short excerpts from the writings of Charles Fillmore.

We invite you to join Silent Unity and others all over the world in these affirmative prayers for August.

ILLUMINATION—The light of Jesus Christ is, symbolically, the life of everyone who enters the same state of mind that He did. You always reap the consequences of your thought, and to enter the Christ mind you have but to think along Jesus Christ lines.

My path is made clear by the light of the indwelling Christ spirit. I go forth in wisdom.

HEALING—Jesus established faith in the power of Spirit and walked on the sea. We cannot walk on the waves of life in our own personal strength. If we remember to call on the strength of the inner Christ we are sustained by unlimited power, by the real self.

The life of the indwelling Christ spirit renews and perfects me. I am strong and healthy.

PROSPERITY—Everyone produces a thought atmosphere that has character and power in proportion to his ability as a thinker. Your power to use Truth increases with expansion; in thought, power is small or great in proportion to your wants and needs.

I am prospered through the power of the indwelling Christ spirit. My life is filled with abundance.

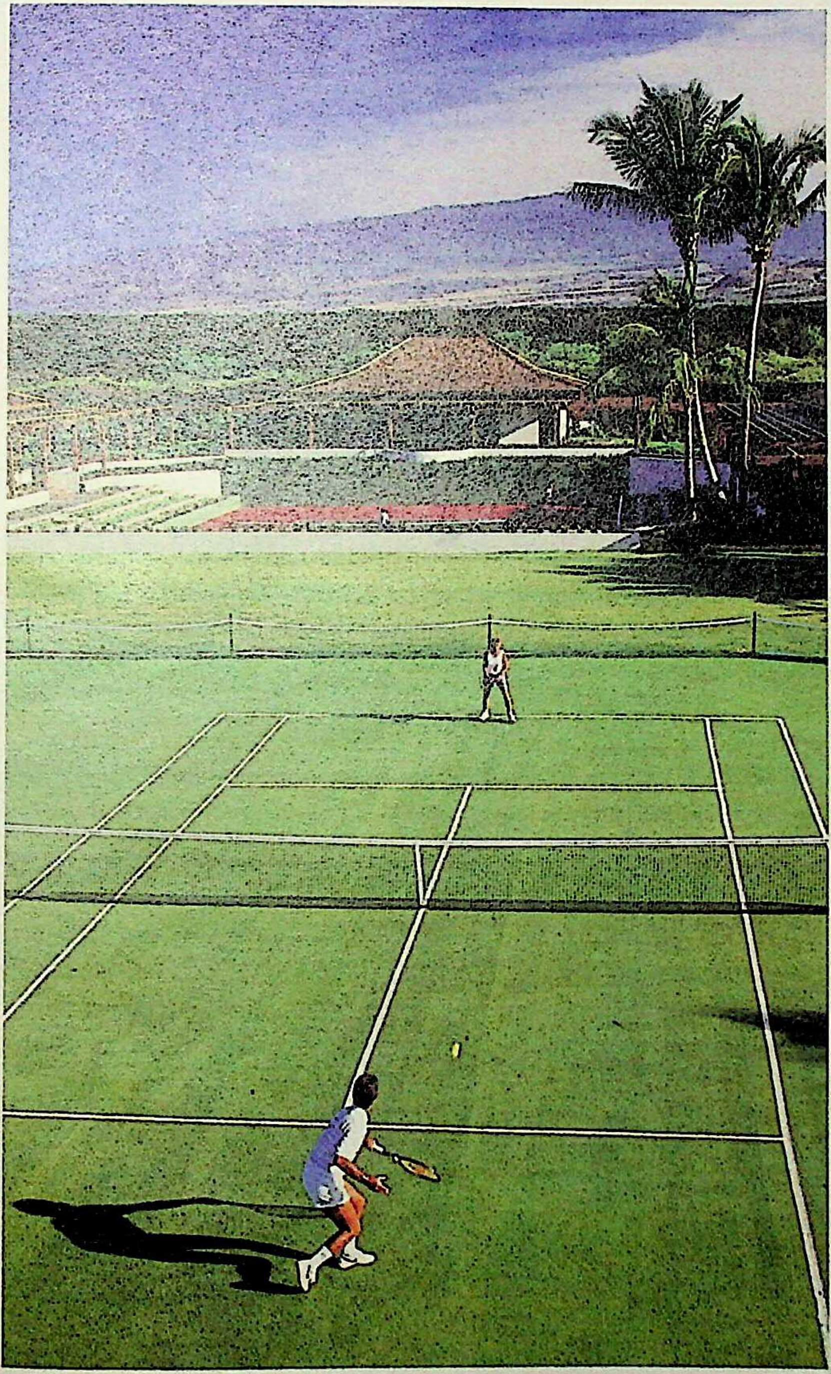
Coping With STRESS

BY C. NORMAN SHEALY, M.D., Ph.D.

SINCE THE Stone Age, stress has come a long way. Unfortunately, most people consider stress to be the problems of day-to-day living; problems with the boss, spouse, family, and so on.

Dr. Hans Selye, one of the earliest scientists to recognize the physical impact of stress, has contributed vastly to our current understanding of how the body reacts to the circumstances of living. Most of Selye's early work had to do with physical and chemical stress, and he demonstrated some extremely important principles. Stress provokes an "alarm reaction." Basically this means that the body puts out more adrenalin, which speeds up the heart rate, releases stored glycogens, and puts starch into the bloodstream for sugar to make more immediate energy available for the brain, nerves, and muscles. Let us assume that one alarm reaction is created by one cup of coffee, but one-third of a cup of coffee produces virtually no reaction. One alarm reaction is also produced by five teaspoons of sugar, but one or two teaspoons causes virtually no reaction. One alarm reaction is created by one cigarette, but a few puffs do not cause any significant reaction. One of the most striking findings in Selye's work is that subliminal stress is additive; therefore, one-third of a cup of coffee plus two teaspoons of sugar plus one-third of a cigarette will produce an alarm reaction even though the individual components taken by themselves would not.

Another significant principle in Selye's work was the finding that repeated exposure to the same alarm reaction causes *adaptation.* This means that when one has had a cup of coffee daily for a week, there is virtually no alarm produced. However, each time we adapt to one stress we lower our abili-



Greg Vaughn/Tom Stack & Assoc., Mauna Lani Racquet Club, Kohala Coast, Hawaii ty to tolerate new stresses, so if you have adapted to one cup of coffee instead of requiring one cigarette for an alarm reaction, perhaps one-third of a cigarette will produce the alarm reaction. Thus, we go through life constantly adapting to many more stressors, but lowering our tolerance for new stress. This leads to the diseases of adaptation, which is virtually every disease known.

In our society the outstanding stressors are caffeine, sugar, nicotine, and alcohol, as well as—and this is one you might not have guessed at—a high intake of fat. Yes, Selye also demonstrated that a high-fat diet is in itself a stressor. The average American consumes about 45 percent of all calories in the form of fat. The ideal is 10 percent, so you can see there is a great deal of "alarm" just from the fat intake in our diet.

Add all of these obvious chemical stressors with smog, water pollution, and the tremendous chemical pollution in our atmosphere and you can see we have a virtual smorgasbord of chemical stress available.

Close behind chemical stress is physical inactivity. I have often said that going to bed for a week is about as stressful as breaking a leg. The body was made to be physically active. Indeed, the alarm reaction, sometimes called the "fight or flight response," occurs because the body is prepared for physical action by the alarm. When we are not physically active we accumulate more stress. A vast majority of Americans do not adequately exercise to maintain normal health and thus have a lowered tolerance for other stress.

Considering the combination of chemical stress and physical inactivity, people who are exposed to these two dominant factors are more susceptible to psychological stresses of any kind.

Basically all psychological stress is the result of fear. There are only five great fears: loss of life, health, money, love, and moral values. Every stress that we acknowledge will fit into one or more of these categories. Sometimes when we feel threatened or fear loss of one of the Big Five we react with anger—how dare you threaten! Sometimes we react with depression—it's more powerful than I am, there's nothing I can do about it. Sometimes we react with guilt—I've not lived up to my own moral values.

And sometimes we don't want to admit that we are afraid, so we call ourselves "anxious."

When faced with a threat, however, an individual who drinks several cups of coffee, smokes a pack of cigarettes, and has the average American intake of forty-two teaspoons of sugar per day will have considerably less tolerance to relatively minor perceived threats than does an individual who avoids those habits and who exercises regularly.

Ultimately, then, coping with stress involves three major factors: Eating right; exercising adequately or "acting right"; and thinking right—having an outstanding positive attitude.

Eating right means minimizing sugar, refined foods, and caffeine and avoiding other chemical glutens such as nicotine. Alcohol should be taken in moderation.

Acting right means getting adequate physical exercise to double the heart rate—a minimum of thirty minutes, preferably one hour, three to four times a week.

Thinking right means having a positive attitude toward life and using some form of mental balancing exercise a minimum of thirty minutes daily. This can be prayer, meditation, or some of the time just listening to good, relaxing music. Individuals who follow these health habits will find life considerably less stressful.

Dr. Shealy is founder and director of the Shealy Institute for Comprehensive Pain and Health Care and clinical research professor of psychology at Forrest Institute of Professional Psychology.

Mauna Lani Racquet Club, Kohala Coast, Hawaii

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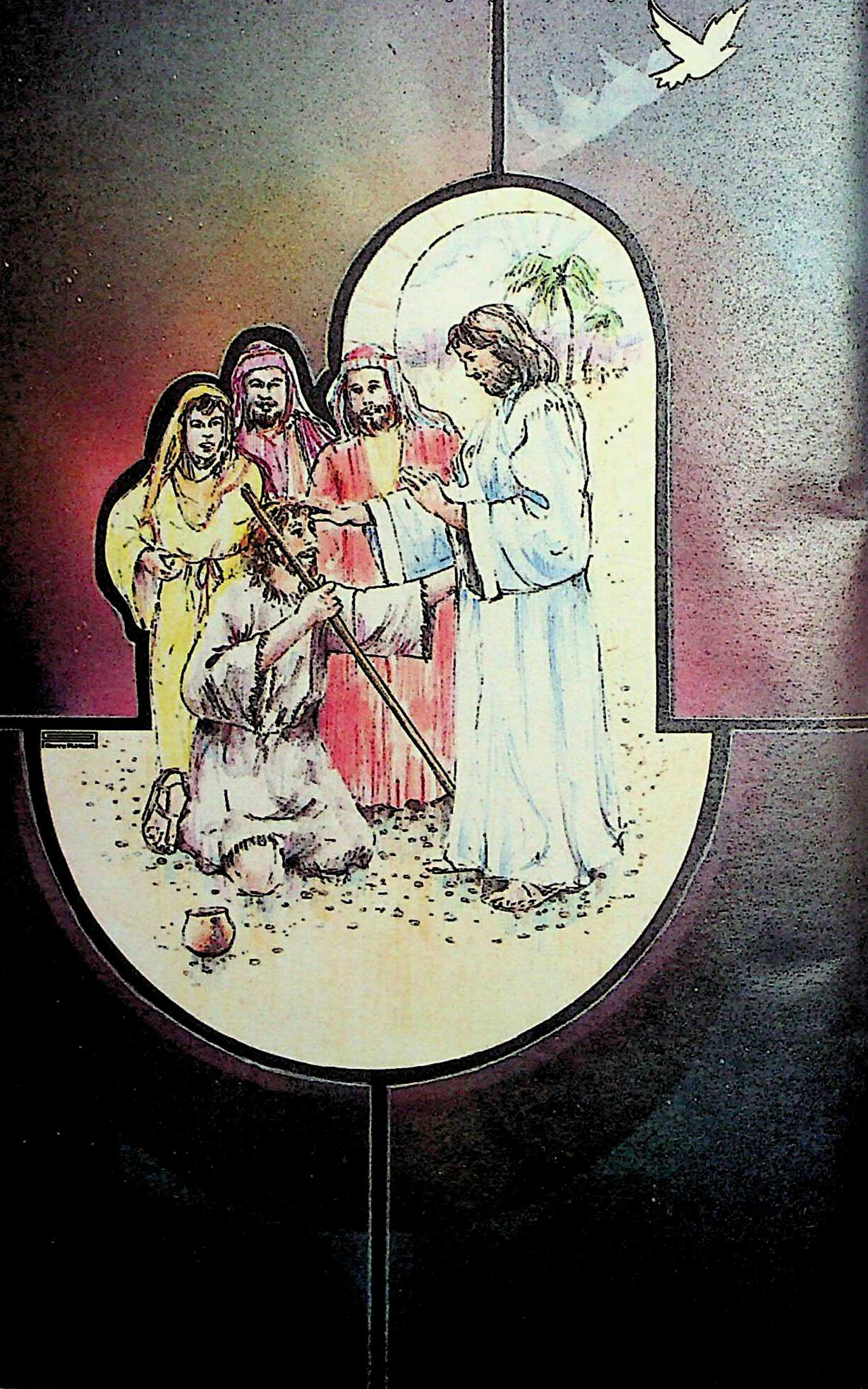

How Biblical Is Unity's Way of Healing?

BY THOMAS SHEPHERD

SPIRITUAL HEALING has always been an embarrassing topic for us theologians. In the ninth chapter of John's gospel we encounter an argument in progress and, if we listen, we'll hear the irritation religious scholars have often felt when confronted by such claims.

A man born blind is healed by Jesus. Do the theologians (Pharisees) marvel at this demonstration of divine power? Hardly. They launch into one of the longest cross-examinations in Scripture: How were your eyes opened? Don't tell us Jesus did it. We know He's a sinner and God don't listen to no sinners. Now, let's hear the truth!

The vast majority of theological books say absolutely nothing to suggest such power is available today.

Next, they call upon the man's parents to confess that he really wasn't born blind. Terrified, Mom and Dad refuse to answer for their son. The bickering continues until the once-blind man infuriates the religious scholars so much they lose their cool and shout, "You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?" and bodily throw him out of the assembly. This is the biblical version of "Don't confuse me with the facts; my mind is made up."

Although John's gospel is best understood as first-century Christian pamphleteering rather than objective history, the author points to a problem that is still with us nineteen-plus centuries later. Amazingly, religious professionals often do not believe God has the power to do anything in the real world, especially when incurable diseases or lifelong physical ailments present themselves.

Sifting through the references to healing in reputable, scholarly works such as the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (Abingdon, 1962) and the *Theological Word Book of the Bible* (Macmillan, 1962), we can find theologians who cautiously allow that Jesus probably healed people. But the vast majority of theological books say absolutely nothing to suggest such power is available today. One of the best-known paperback references for ministers, Van A. Harvey's *Handbook of Theological Terms* (Macmillan, 1974), does not even list the word *healing*.

Pick up a volume written by some august figure in modern theology—Paul Tillich, Karl Barth, or perhaps Rudolf Bultmann—and thumb through the index. You will most likely find them silent on the subject. Why? Is healing so peripheral to Christian faith? Not according to the New Testament.

Healing: The Central Focus of Jesus' Ministry

We cannot enter the New Testament world without stumbling over sick beds carried by relatives in hot pursuit of Jesus, or bumping into lepers clanging their bells and shouting "Unclean!" as they haunt the highways for a glimpse of the carpenter from Nazareth who has cleansed others of their kind. Roman officers seek Him for stricken servants; friends send for Him when Lazarus is taken ill and they don't lose heart, even when Jesus arrives too late. A woman touches the hem of His robe and is cured of a lifetime's bleeding; a paralyzed man at the pool of Beth-zatha (Bethesda) has made a career of lying by the waters, praying for a cure, until Jesus asks him if he really wants to be healed, then heals him.

Mark, probably the earliest gospel, portrays the earthly work of Jesus as primarily a healing ministry. He cures "a man with an unclean spirit," breaks a fever gripping Simon's mother-in-law, cleanses a leper, and heals many who were sick with various diseases in the first chapter alone.

Amid all this biblical evidence, the attitude of mainline/liberal scholarship remains skeptical. Writing a monograph on "Health and Healing" in the *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, R. K. Harrison begrudgingly admits that Jesus must have performed some actual healings. Note the careful wording, by which the author neither confirms nor denies the rumor that Jesus healed people who were really sick: "These healings cannot be explained satisfactorily on the simple assumption that he (Jesus) was a shrewd psychologist who dismissed a wide variety of psychoneurotic conditions by means of adroit techniques which were in advance of contemporary practice. While psychological theories can throw much light on the healing work of Jesus, they cannot of themselves explain it fully."

This quote spotlights the contradiction in modern scholarship: mainline/liberal Christianity is too materialistic to believe spiritual healing really works and too well-grounded in biblical scholarship to deny that the first-century Church passionately believed healing to be the central focus of the ministry of Jesus Christ. Rather than draw one of the two conclusions required by this dilemma (either spiritual healing is real or the biblical record is wrong), liberal scholars tend to avoid the problem by mentioning psychological theories of healing and then acknowledging these are inadequate to explain what Jesus did. Hence, we are confronted by a mystery, which lets us off the hook.

Perhaps a more compelling reason why mainline/liberal theologians have shied away from healing grows out of their aversion to anything resembling fundamentalism.

Images of Tent Meetings

Fundamentalism loudly proclaims the power of God to heal all manner of diseases, although it is divided on how such healing takes place and whether the "gift" of healing (i.e., the ability to heal another person by spiritual means, usually involving intercessory prayer and the laying on of hands) remains valid today. Quite a few big-name evangelists made their ministries famous by wrestling with the devil in tent revival meetings, calling the sick and disabled to come forward and be healed. More than one modern "televangelist" struggles with an image problem, their names still conjuring visions of sawdust aisles and canvas cathedrals in the minds of many people. This tent-meeting mentality and fundamentalist connection has doubtless driven some liberal scholars away from prudent consideration of healing as a viable form of ministry to a hurting world. Because it smacks of fundamentalism, liberal Protestant scholarship wants nothing to do with faith-healing, regardless of how biblical it may be.

Roman Catholicism, however, has a much healthier attitude toward the healing ministry, and its clergy more regularly pray for the bodies as well as the souls of their parishioners than do most Protestant ministers. Some Catholic parishes offer an optional "healing mass" during which prayers for the sick and the ancient rite of "laying on hands" accompany the Eucharist. These special masses are usually part of a charismatic ministry and may include other "gifts of the spirit," such as tongues.

The so-called "last rites" of the Catholic church, more correctly called the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, serves not just to prepare a person to die; the priest also prays for God to heal the person if that is His will.

Jesus: Savior/Healer

This is where mystical/metaphysical Christianity, at last, leaves the grandstand and takes the field. We know God's will is always on the side of health, wholeness, and prosperity. Jesus would not have spent so much time healing people if God were only concerned with salvation of the soul.

In fact, the New Testament Greek word for *savior*, σωτήρ soter (pronounced séw-tear; literally, "to make whole") can also be translated *healer*. We derive the technical theological term, soteriology (the study of doctrines about salvation), directly from this word. In its verb form, we can render passages either "Jesus saves us" or "Jesus heals us." The next time you read about Jesus saving us, the saving acts of God, or our salvation in Christ, mentally replay the passage substituting the alternate reading. The results are enlightening.

Let's Ask Ourselves the Hard Question

This should not surprise mystical/metaphysical Christians, though it may jolt those who are not familiar with the healing emphasis of practical Christianity. However, if we are going to call mainline Protestantism to task for abandoning the biblical emphasis on healing, we must in all honesty ask ourselves the hard question: How faithful to the New Testament record is the style of spiritual healing practiced in mystical/metaphysical churches today?

We see Jesus healing with a touch.

We see Him driving out demons.

We see a woman healed by grasping the hem of His robe.

None of these fit neatly into the categories and methods of Christian healing practiced today in mystical/metaphysical churches. Our emphasis is on centering prayer, affirmation and denial, entering the silence, "knowing the Truth," and claiming our oneness with God through the Christ-indwelling. No such techniques are found in the pages of scripture. We even go so far as to deny that evil exists as a force, so how could Jesus drive out demons? And could merely touching the clothing worn by a healer give relief from physical symptoms? Is our method of healing faithful to the biblical witness?

Absolutely. As long as the person believes in the power of God, healing will follow. The key to understand the healing ministry of Jesus is not found by mimicking the *techniques* He was forced to use among a primitive and superstitious people who believed in the demon theory of disease (i.e., that evil spirits caused all sickness). We must dig deeper, to the bedrock of all spiritual healing, the *faith* He generated in those who were healed.

Three Conditions for Healing

To understand Jesus' method we must note three conditions existing in all instances of biblical healing: 1) There was a desire to be healed; no one was healed by accident. In some cases, the illness drove the person to madness or deep into a coma, but the willingness to be healed was always present. No one ever complained after Jesus healed him. 2) Someone did something to bring the problem before Jesus. Sometimes this meant just explaining what the problem was; sometimes people acted boldly, like the men who lowered the sick person on a cot through the ceiling to get him to Jesus. 3) Faith, usually manifested in "letting go and letting God," preceded the healing.

How does this differ from the healing achieved by modern mystical/metaphysical Christians like Unity co-founder Myrtle Fillmore? Only in this way: Jesus Christ was not physically present when the healing took place. Myrtle

Fillmore called upon a strong faith in the unseen spiritual presence of healing power. But for those in Jesus' time, the awesome presence of the Master must surely have energized their faith in the power of God to heal. Listening to His voice gave calm assurance that God was able to work wonders, reminding them of His presence and power surging through the universe.

If Jesus walked by and I were lying paralyzed on a mat, I know beyond the shadow of a doubt that He could raise me up and set me walking again.

Would the presence of Jesus Christ make healing easier?

Of course!

Listening to Jesus teach, it would be so easy for me to believe that God wants me whole and well—why, I could just reach out and claim my health by touching the hem of His robe!

If Jesus walked by and I were lying paralyzed on a mat, I know beyond the shadow of a doubt that He could raise me up and set me walking again.

If my sight were lost and Jesus passed me on the highway, telling me to see again, there is no doubt in my mind that my eyes would be cleared and the colors and light of God's world would flood my senses.

Why? Because it is the belief in the absolute power of God to work such wonders which makes the healing possible. When Jesus and the Apostles walked the earth, humankind had a direct link to the power of God because He showed us how to believe so powerfully. Jesus told blind Bartimaeus the secret of spiritual healing: "And Jesus said to him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' And the blind man said to him, 'Master, let me receive my sight.' And Jesus said to him, 'Go your way; your faith has made you well' " (Mk. 10:51-52).

Consciousness, Not Technique, Is Required

The technique of healing is almost irrelevant. Sometimes Jesus touched people, sometimes He just spoke a word. Once He made a paste and spread it on the eyes of a blind man, but no one seriously believes there is any special curative power in spit and clay. It was willingness to receive healing by faith that gave sight to the man who had been born blind. And it took a spiritual presence as powerful as Jesus Christ to instill that kind of faith, which is most likely the reason such apparently miraculous healings seldom occur today. If Jesus Christ told me it would happen, if He promised me, I could be healed of anything. Because of His miracle-working power as the unique Son of God? No. His presence would provoke me to believe wholeheartedly, to enable me to receive what God is always trying to give me: health, wholeness, and prosperity in mind, body, and affairs.

If we make this power to heal the special privilege of Jesus, then He becomes a miracle worker after the model of Greek mythology, a demigod whose unique abilities underscore the difference between His exalted status and our position as lowly mortals. Jesus becomes the divine-human magician, not the Way-Shower. The power to heal must be available to everyone if God is truly the God of all sentient beings.

Is This Biblical?

Nothing could be truer to the deeds and teachings of the Master. He constantly challenged His disciples to perform the same "miraculous" deeds as He did. It is faith in the power of God which makes us whole, which is why Jesus is our Soter, the savior/healer who makes faith available to us by demonstrating its power. Not by technique, but by faith are we healed.

As we progress spiritually, we shall someday understand the cryptic reply of the man born blind as he looked eye-to-eye at the disbelieving theologians of ancient Israel: "One thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see" (Jn. 9:25).

Thomas Shepherd is a licensed Unity minister. He is also an ordained minister with the Unitarian-Universalist Association and the Congregational Christian Church. A Vietnam War veteran, Shepherd has a B.S. in Education from the University of Idaho and an M.Div. from the Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. He has written several articles for professional journals. Shepherd is married to the former Carol-Jean Loos.

WEE WISDOM
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From the Writings of Charles Fillmore

The Road to Health

WE HAVE NEVER had a desire that cannot in the providence of God be fulfilled. Creation would be weak in its most vital part if this were not true. Desire is recognized as the onward impetus of the ever-evolving soul as it builds from the within out, and it carries with it fulfillment as a necessary corollary.

All is mind, and the things that appear must be statements of mind. Thus mind is. The is-ness of mind is but the one side of it. Being is not limited to the level of is-ness—it has all possibility, which includes the breaking forth of its inherencies into the realm of appearance.

Thus mind has two sides, the invisible and the visible. Neither can be left out of a true philosophy. To say that mind is all, and at the same time deny that the things that do appear have any part in that allness is to give place to but one-half of the great Truth.

Every mental problem has its statement. That statement is made in response to the desire to know experimentally whether the ideal concept is capable of proof. A variety of factors are involved in every statement of a mental concept. These factors are not an integral part of the statement itself, but through them it is worked out. Thus in a simple mathematical problem enter processes that are not preserved after the solution has been reached, yet were necessary to the solution. These processes are made up of a combination of factors, and the outcome of each step is a matter of experiment. The ultimate must be the fulfillment of the idea, but the intermediate steps may be diverged or retraced many times.

If this is true in mathematics, it must be true in the creation of the universe. Here is where he who has caught sight of the perfection of the ideal realm denies the appearance because it does not express that perfection in its wholeness.

With like judgment the student in the depths of a mathematical problem would suddenly erase all his work because the answer was not at once apparent. We would not consider a farmer of sound judgment who cut down his corn in the tassel because it did not show the ripened ears.

Don't jump at conclusions. Consider all sides, the visible and the invisible, the within and the without.

The fact that you have an ideal world carries with it the possibility of fulfillment in expression. In Being you cannot shirk expression. To think is to express, and you are doing that without cessation. You may deny that these things of the world have existence, yet as long as you live in contact with them you are recognizing their place. A wholesale denial of their existence keeps you even as a house divided against itself. A reconciliation must take place before you can demonstrate the power of the Christ. Jesus did not say that His body was nothing, but He did say that He had power to take it up or lay it down. He laid it down in corruption, and raised it in incorruption. He found that His ideal was not being expressed in the body, which was subject to decay, so He let the corruptible be crossed out, and from the ruins raised the body of light, which appeared and disappeared at will. This was the fulfillment of His ministry, and the demonstration of the power of the Spirit to overcome that last enemy, death.

All persons desire to overcome disease and death. The fulfillment of this desire would be perpetuation of existence in form; so in its last analysis we see that we all want to continue our chain of expression unbroken in duration and indefinitely extended.

This has always been the desire of humankind, and the whole world is today fighting this monster, death. Oceans of medicines are swallowed daily, millions of doctors are exerting all their energies, and prayers unnumbered are uttered in a struggle to vanquish this dreaded enemy of humankind. This indicates a most powerful desire to be fulfilled. Jesus showed how it might be done, and gave the recipe. He said, "If any one keeps my word, he will never taste death." He also said, "The word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me," and, "The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life."

The "words" of Jesus were tremendous. They raised the ideal of man and God far above what had ever been conceived. They so far transcended the thought plane of the people that even His followers did not accept them, and many "no longer went about with him."

Until lately we have not grasped the lesson of the power of the word expressed from this high ideal. Who in the past has taken Jesus literally and sought to overcome death by keeping His sayings? Many have believed in His doctrine, and a great ecclesiastical industry has been built upon it as a foundation, but who has taken in full faith the words of Jesus and made them flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone, by not only believing them but by saturating his mind with them until they reincarnated themselves in his body?

This is the secret of every spiritual demonstration, not only a concept of what is true of Being, but a carrying out in thought, word, and act of that concept.

We see people seeking the aid of Spirit to cure them of physical ills. They do not approach Spirit with that true desire for the higher life which should inspire them. They find indulgence of their lusts and passions curtailed by some infirmity, which they want healed in order that they may continue in the fleshly way. Spirit does not judge motives. It is principle. Jesus said, "Sin no more, that nothing worse befall thee."

Dedicate yourself to God and His work. Lay at the feet of Spirit all your desires, passions, and appetites. Turn away from the old habits that have robbed you of your vitality and sunk your body into the depths of inanition.

We are in the grasp of bodily death through the indulgence of false appetites. We can never put on the immortal robe of purity until we covenant with God to sacrifice upon His altar of spiritual fire all our energies. We must lift up the old serpent that we are now crawling in the dust with. No one can do this without spiritual aid. Jesus saw this, and through Him was provided a helper, "the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name."

Whoever silently calls upon this Spirit, and in its abiding place in his own being agrees to follow it and do its will, shall be helped to overcome all the habits and indulgences that are keeping him out of the kingdom of heaven.

"Seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."

"From the Writings of Charles Fillmore" are taken from early issues of *Unity* magazine. They have been edited to conform to current language usage.

Love Your Body With Exercise and Nutrition

BY SUSAN SMITH JONES, Ph.D.

WE ARE ALL miracles of God's loving creation, whole beings—mind, spirit, and body—working as one; when something affects our bodies physically, like vigorous exercise or wholesome nutrition, it must also have a positive effect on our minds, as well as enriching our awareness of the Spirit within. Similarly, lack of exercise or consuming junk foods, which brings physical deterioration, has a negative effect on our minds. Those who exercise regularly and eat healthfully know exactly what I mean; those who don't are yet to discover feeling alive and radiant.

Keeping this holistic approach in mind—and in spirit and body—we can see how living healthfully will do wonders to enhance our well-being. When we really get down to it, we owe it to ourselves to take the best care of our bodies that we can. Each of us needs to recognize and acknowledge all the wonderful benefits we're accruing, because we are meant to be healthy, vibrantly alive, and radiantly fit.

But to be healthy just for the sake of being healthy is missing the mark. Our bodies are the beautiful temples for the Spirit that lives within us. The more we care for ourselves and do the things that bring about greater health and well-being, the more we are able to get in touch with our real selves—that shining center of love and light within us.

We must be continually thankful for our miraculous bodies and all their wondrous functions. We must thank our bodies and God by taking good care of ourselves. The better we take care of ourselves, the easier it will be to live to our highest potential, to be in balance, and to be filled with vibrant health.

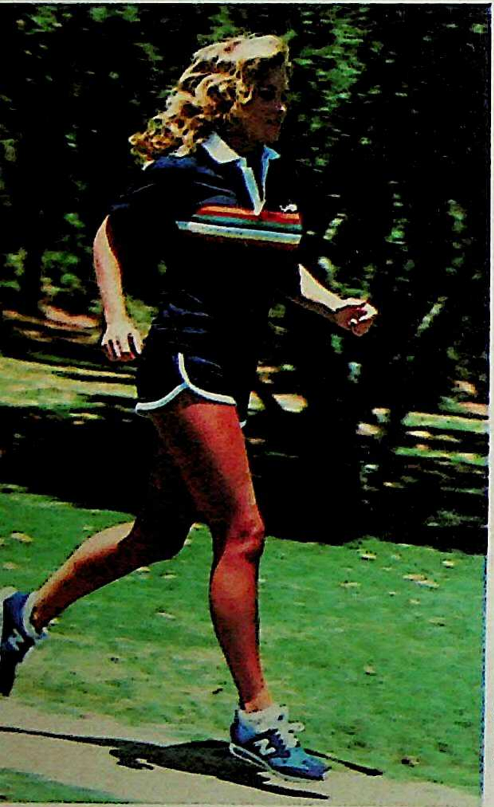
We must not let our health take a backseat to anything. If we have an ailment or problem, or if we don't feel comfortable or confident with how we look or feel, all parts of our life are affected. It's as though we are looking at the world through cloudy eyes. Poor health interferes with everything—relationships, business, family har-

Mark Farrell

mony, and so on—so we must make health a top priority, taking time to nurture our wellness. If we don't take time for wellness, we are going to have to take time for sickness.

Good health is something we can choose to have by consciously deciding to do those things that support well-being. It also involves taking responsibility for wellness and not blaming how we feel on our family, doctors, environment, friends, or circumstances. Our level of health right this moment is a result of the countless choices we have made regarding the foods we select, the exercise we get, and the thoughts we think. At any moment, we can choose differently.

Where this new choice-making begins, I believe, is with appreciating and respecting our marvelous bodies. The body is indeed a miracle of divine creation, and the more I study about the body the more I am amazed at how beautifully it is designed. In terms of a cold scientific analysis, the body might be regarded as being two-thirds water, plus carbon, calcium, and other chemicals worth just a few dollars (even at the inflated prices of the late 80s). But right now, just as we are sitting, standing, or lying down, our bodies are performing amazing feats of engineering, chemistry, and physics that no engine designed by woman or man can duplicate. What's more, the body improves with use. For example, the more stress we put on our bodies through physical exercise, the stronger our bones and muscles will become and the more efficiently the body will function.



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Clearly, the body is fantastic and deserves respect and appreciation. Nutritionist and philosopher Paul Bragg has offered a vivid idea of how wonderful the body really is in this statement: "Now stop and think! The Creator has presented you with the world's most wonderful machine—your own body. This miracle-machine has its own nonstop motor (the heart), its own fueling system (the digestive tract), its own filtration system (kidneys), its own temperature controls (sweat glands), and so on. Indeed, this most remarkable contrivance even has the power to reproduce itself." ☺

(Continued next month)

Next month we will deal specifically with how to maintain wellness through good nutrition.

Susan Smith Jones, Ph.D. (Health Sciences) has been a fitness instructor at UCLA for more than 15 years. She travels internationally as a motivational speaker and human potential consultant to community, corporate, and church groups. She is the author of *Celebrate Life!* (audiocassette series), and her latest book is titled *Choose To Be Healthy* (Celestial Arts Publisher—P.O. Box 7327, Berkeley, CA 94707). With the forward by Dr. Wayne Dyer, Susan's book explores how to be radiantly healthy—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. To inquire, please call 1-800-841-BOOK (in California 415-524-1801).

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